142 /28 cont./

Not rarely the arrangement of the teeth is irregular. With relative frequency one notes the absence of the upper incisors, particularly in the villages in which it is customary to suck a great deal of sugar cane. The development of caries is attributed [164] [146] to the use of salt in the diet, at least among the Ñandéva; there are those who also give as the cause the consumption of half-raw or merely smoked meat. The fact is, however, that one meets many adults with very well preserved teeth, without a flaw or the slightest indication of caries. Among the Kayová, in the individuals lacking the upper incisors, the crown of the lower ones has a length one and a half times that of the other teeth. Some Mbüá of the village of Palmeirinha showed a slight alveolar prognathism, accompanied by /27/ hiatodontia. With respect to the latter [732] peculiarity, the Indians questioned said that it was not a matter of mutilation, but a congenital formation.

The occurrence of the plica palpebralis is not generalized [143] in any of the three subgroups. It is a strange fact, because my observations among mestizo children lead me to acknowledge the genetic dominance of this characteristic among the Guaraní. In numerous cases the fold is not enough to cover the caruncula.

304 There are few physical mutilations in use among the Guaraní. The most important one is the piercing of the lower lip, to which boys are subjected before puberty. As acculturation progresses, [177] [192] the use of the tembetá or lip plug is abandoned, as well as the piercing of the lip. The Ñandéva must have abandoned it long ago; I have not seen any individual with a pierced lip among [173] them. But in the mythology of this group, Tupí, the god of thunder, crosses the sky with a glittering tembetá, represented by lightning, which seems to indicate that in ancient times the Ñandéva, too, were familiar with this ornament. For their part, some of the present-day Mbüá do not have the pierced lip, and those who display it do not customarily use the tembetá; I have seen Mbüá boys with a pierced lip only in a group from Itariri (Paulista coast) who had come from Rio Grande do Sul in 1948 under the chieftaincy of the ñanderú Miguel. Those that most [184] cling to the custom are the Kayová, although even among them,

2: Schaden--31 E-4,5 (1946-1954) 1962 SM4 Guarani SM4

/29 cont./

854 855 175 [164] [536] In part the not very rational methods of raising the children are responsible for the high index of child mortality. On the occasion of journeys or celebrations, the children sleep in the open, exposed to the mist, becoming victims of grippe or pneumonia. During the dances, which extend from nightfall to the break of day, many mothers keep the infants riding on their hips, paying no attention to the violent shaking to which they expose them all night; only robust children withstand such practices. Thus cultural patterns are combined with the factors of natural selection.

515 The patterns of hygiene in force among the Guaraní are very rudimentary, which naturally promotes the spread of contagious diseases of all sorts. Ordinarily one does not see the slightest preoccupation with body cleanliness. A Mbüá from Xapecó told me [829] that "the Guaraní go about dirty, because they were really born to be poor." If there is a river close to the village, the young lads may once in a while take a bath, but solely for the purpose of cooling the body on a hot day or of having fun in the water. The Ñandéva of the coast say that, in the opinion of the "ancients," a morning bath would give "long life," a belief that, by the way, also exists in other native populations; they remember an old man who demanded that children take a bath in the river every morning, "in order to become strong," but they confess that the Guaraní of today "prefer to remain near the fire." -- The smell of sweat [147] and smoke that characterizes them has been erroneously taken for a "racial odor."

164 Health conditions are not good. In the coastal villages, for example, many suffer from malaria, venereal diseases, frequent [146] grippes, etc. The irregular diet and alcoholism reduce physical [733] resistance. The Kayová of Mato Grosso have been decimated by [751] tuberculosis, which readily spreads among them, not only because of the lack of cleanliness, but because of the custom of having many people eat at one time from the same dishes or cups, of preparing chicha (a beverage fermented with the aid of saliva) in large collective tubs, of not dispensing the chimarrão /a beverage made with maté/ and, above all, the tereré (a beverage of maté with cold water, taken by means of a suction tube), and, finally, by the nocturnal dances in the open air.